

March Meeting

**Friday, March 18
7:30 pm**

John Stuart, KM6QX

**Our Savior's Lutheran Church
1035 Carol Lane
Lafayette, CA**

Presidential QRM

By Trevor Hall, WA6JAU

Sorry MDARC for missing the last general meeting, but I was in Des Moines, Iowa on a business trip. I have received great feedback on the meeting thanks to our great Vice President Joe Cusumano, KF6RGH. Thanks Joe. Thanks Kody Kerwin, KG6CZW, for your informative presentation.

The Hamvention in Dayton Ohio is just around the corner. The dates are May 20 through May 22. The airline prices are starting to rise again, so if you are planning on going to Dayton I would recommend making reservations now. I went last year and it was a very worthwhile trip.

The big question on the local front is where is the Livermore Swapmeet is moving to. In case you have not heard. The Livermore Swapmeet will have to move to a new location in May. Livermore Amateur Radio Klub is trying to get permission to use 9 acres at Robertson Park, which is the Livermore Rodeo Grounds. This new location is not firm yet, but I will keep you posted with the latest information as I receive it.

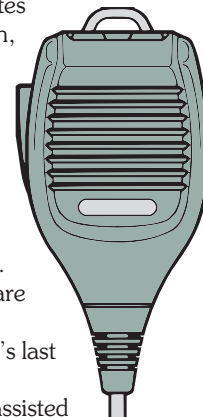
The MDARC auction is in April, so start collecting those valuable rare items that everyone is looking for.

Our March speaker is John Stuart, KM6QX. I learned a lot from John's last presentation, so I am looking forward to the next meeting.

The last ARRL letter has a great story on a rescue in Alaska that was assisted by amateur radio. Every time I hear about a lost hiker I wonder why more hikers are not amateur radio operators. The rescue in Alaska was aided by 2 meters, but ask Dana Jones, K6BRR, some time how far he reaches on HF with his QRP rig. I am amazed every time I see Dana's portable station.

The Technical Committee is working hard on the new video controller for ATV and are making repairs to the 2 meter repeater power amplifier. If you want to know more, attend a Tech Committee Meeting on every first Saturday of the month at the Pittsburg Environmental center on Harbor Way. The meeting starts at 8:00am.

Have a great month and try to stay dry.



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FCC Morse, restructuring proposals could be out by mid-year

(March 1, 2005 Newington, CT)—The FCC continues to work toward developing a Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM) that will spell out what the Commission has in mind with respect to possible changes in the current Morse code requirement and Amateur Radio licensing.

A total of 18 petitions have been filed, including one from the ARRL, seeking Part 97 rule changes addressing the future of the 5 WPM Morse requirement (Element 1) and revisions to the overall Amateur Radio licensing structure. The FCC plans to tackle all 18 in a single proceeding.

On the code issue, petitions—and comments in response to them—run the gamut from retaining or even beefing up the Morse requirement to eliminating it altogether. (The ARRL's proposal would retain the 5 WPM Morse examination for Amateur Extra class applicants only.)

The League and others have also put forth proposals for a new entry-level Amateur Radio license class. At this point, personnel in the FCC Wireless Telecommunications Bureau are continuing to review the thousands of comments filed on the 18 petitions.

While the FCC appears unlikely to release an NPRM any sooner than mid-year, the issue still may be a major discussion topic during the FCC Forum at Dayton Hamvention, May 20-22.



Mt. Diablo Amateur Radio Club W6CX

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The *Carrier* is a monthly publication of the Mount Diablo Amateur Radio Club (MDARC). It is the policy of the editor to publish all material submitted by the membership provided such material is in good taste, relevant to amateur radio and of interest to MDARC members, and space is available.

All material must be submitted to the editor by the first day of the month of publication. Material is accepted on a first-in, first-out basis. Articles and other material may be submitted via Internet email to carrier@gardnerclan.net or delivered to the editor at the address listed in the club roster. Material will be accepted in plain ASCII or rich text format (RTF). Material may also be submitted as hardcopy.

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MDARC General Meeting Minutes

February 18, 2005

The meeting was opened at 7:35 PM by Vice President Joe Cusumano.

Following the flag salute the guests were introduced. Joe announced that the speaker tonight is Kerwin, KG6CZW, who is the communications specialist for the Contra Costa Consolidated Fire District.

The minutes of last month's general meeting were approved as published in the *Carrier*.

Dick, AA6DL, Club Treasurer, presented a very favorable report of the financial condition of MDARC. He indicated that the total for the 3 bank accounts is \$47,218.48.

Dick, KT6X, gave a brief report about PACIFICON and the planned meeting Saturday morning at the Concord Police Dept.

Pete Harris, KE6ZIW, discussed the 4 public service events planned in April. He encouraged all members to keep their skills up by participating in these events. One of the events will require as many as 17 operators.

A motion was presented by Paul, KC6TZU, that read as follows: The Board of Directors shall appoint an audit committee of no less than three members of the Mt. Diablo Amateur Radio Club to audit the books of the organization not later than March 30, 2005 and report their findings to the general membership. The motion also called for a year-end audit as well. The motion was seconded and discussion followed. A second motion was made and seconded to table Paul's motion. The tabling motion was passed with a hand vote of 16 to 8. During the discussion of both motions, there was a consensus that the Board should arrange for such audits and the Board members attending agreed to put it on the next agenda.

The business meeting was closed at approximately 8:15 and was following by a short break and Kerwin's excellent presentation on the National Incident System and its relationship to both this country's natural disasters and those in foreign countries.

Minutes submitted by Dick, KT6X, Acting Secretary

MDARC Board Meeting Minutes

February 7, 2005

President Trevor Hall, WA6JAU, called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Board Members present: Pres. Trevor Hall, WA6JAU, V. P. Joe Cusumano, KF6RGH, Secretary Paul Dickey, N6JOX, Treasurer Dick Schulze, AA6DL, Emergency Coordinator Dana Jones, K6BRR, and Members Dick Brown, KT6X, Jay Caldis, KT6Y, Bob Green, K6GD.

Other club members and guests: Technical Committee Member Keith Latin, N6PMF, Co- Field Day Chairman Trevor Raty, KG6MDW, Membership Chairman, Pete Slagle K6XL (7:45).

The minutes of the Jan. 3 meeting were approved unanimously with the correction of the title of Trevor Raty to Co-Chairman.

Treasurer Dick Schulze reported to the Board on the progress under the approved budget, membership numbers (160 renewals thus far, \$7232.50, plus 10 renewals before the calendar year = 170), and the accounts (money market \$4776.27, checking \$12,978.21, CD \$30,000 = total \$47,754.48). Dick reported that he changed the monthly fee-based ATT long-distance line to a 10 cents/minute charge to effect additional savings. Dick noted the probability of substantial savings in insurance charges once a complete owned-equipment listing was finished.

President Trevor Hall commended Dana for coordinating last Saturday's Safety Fair in East County, which was well done.

EC Dana Jones noted that the County Fair would be June 2-5, and that more participation was needed from Club members to staff the MDARC booth to provide service to Fair-goers. The uniformed group and RACES members participate in specific activities, but members are needed to provide information and obtain new memberships.

VP Joe Cusumano mentioned that there was no new info to report on Field Day.

Dana Jones reminded members that each 3rd Saturday is RACES training. The next session is Sat. Feb. 12, when there will be RACES Basic Training.

Dick Brown had assembled a proposed yearly calendar of meetings and events for the Board to approve. He led a discussion of various dates and information to be placed on the calendar. The Board agreed that all committee heads should present a status report to the Board at each monthly Board meeting, either by e-mail or in person. Dick agreed to maintain and update the calendar.

As matters of new business:

- Keith Lattin reported that the 2-meter repeater 100w amplifier had died, but that it may be fixable. He will report further at the next meeting.

- Dick Brown observed that the current Club By-Laws were prepared in 1997. The Board approved publishing the By-Laws on the web site, as well as a current listing of officers and committee chairmen. The Board approved a cut-off date of March 7 for adding names of paid members to the new directory.

- Dana Jones exhibited a low-cost informative business card that could be made for Club members to give to interested persons. Bob Green and Dana volunteered to design the proposed card.

- Trevor Hall led the Board in a discussion of the acquired iPod. The Board approved selling 50 raffle tickets at \$5 each as a fund-raiser.

President Trevor Hall postponed the issue of family membership rates to the next Board meeting, Mar. 7 (@ Carl's Jr.), and adjourned the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Paul Dickey N6JOX, Secretary

Amateur Radio at the International Pathfinder Camporee

By Jim Hoffer, KW8T

Similar to Scouts, Pathfinders is a co-ed organization of young people ages 10 through 15, and is sponsored by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Over 32,000 attended the International Pathfinder Camporee at the EAA field in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, August 10-14, 2004. This large event is held every five years, and this was the second time the Adventist Amateur Radio Association had been at EAA.

Several months before, the organizers contacted us regarding the possibility of offering Amateur Radio classes at the Camporee. Many other classes and activities would be provided as well—it was important to keep the kids busy!

Erwin, WB7ATT, shows one class where hams can operate in the spectrum.

Of course, it is impossible to teach Amateur Radio in a very short time and give the Technician class test, so we came up with a 50 minute course we entitled "Introduction to Amateur Radio." Thus, many more people could be exposed to the ham radio "bug." Our curriculum covered a few basic electronic principles, a little on rules and regulations, Morse code and a demonstration of our working stations. We were located in the back corner of Hangar B, where it was quite easy to string up a G5RV antenna just outside the building.

Our classes started at 9 AM and continued until 5 PM. Sometimes we hardly had a break for lunch! We were rewarded with having given our class to around 300 folks, including the kids and their leaders. By the end of the class period, my wife had a lovely certificate ready to hand to each one, plus a packet of materials including an order blank for ARRL's Now You're

Talking. In addition, we logged in about 130 licensed hams who came by our booth, and conducted a brief net at 5 PM on one of the local repeaters.

Our team consisted of Jim Hummel, KC5BSJ; David Anderson, KA3OZK; Vera Hoffer; Jim Hoffer, KW8T, and Erwin Bishop, WB7ATT.

And yes, we would do it again!

Public Service Events

Participating in radio communications for Public Service events is a thrilling experience for many different reasons. Some of these are:

- The magic of radio transmissions
- The camaraderie of being on a radio team
- The chance to do something meaningful for a good cause
- The fun and satisfaction of using your radio equipment and opportunity to learn its various capabilities in real-life situations
- The beautiful places and settings that you get to enjoy.

The upcoming events known at this time for 2005 are as follows:

1. **MS Walk**
4/10//05 Heather Farms Park, Walnut Creek
Event Coordinator: Jeff Hart, 925-798-9281
2. **Primavera 100 Mile Bike Ride**
4/17/05, Sunol
Event Coordinator: Bob Green, 925-323-8869
3. **Top Hat Classic Bike Ride**
4/30/05, Pleasanton
Event Coordinator: Dick Brown, 925-676-9048
4. **March of Dimes Walk America**
4/30/04, Heather Farms Park, Walnut Creek
Event Coordinator: Terry Matzkin, 925-820-5848
5. **Devil Mt. Run for Children's Hospital**
5/1/05, Danville
Event Coordinator: Ed Ritchie, 925-837-3265

To sign-up for events call Pete Harris (925)-228-4503 or email Pete at pharris125@comcast.net or come to Radio Communication Events table at MDARC Meetings

Oppositions to BPL Petitions for Reconsideration due by March 23

(March 11, 2005 Newington, CT)—Opposition comments ("oppositions") to the various petitions for reconsideration of the the FCC's October 14, 2004, Report and Order (R&O) adopting new Part 15 rules governing BPL must be filed by Wednesday, March 23, in the two BPL-related proceedings—ET Docket 03-104 and ET Docket 04-37. A 10-day period to file replies to oppositions will follow. Petitions for reconsideration have been filed by BPL industry groups and proponents as well as by the ARRL and other organizations and individuals concerned about BPL's interference potential. All petitions for reconsideration are available for viewing via the FCC's Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS). Those wishing to file

RACES Training Schedule Feb.-Apr. 2005

Date	Location	Subject
February 5th	Sommerville Towne Center Mall	Antioch Safety Fair
February 19th	Fire Training Center, Pleasant Hill	Check In & Staging
March 19th	525 Henrietta, Martinez, CA	Basic Training
April 16th	Fire Training Center, Pleasant Hill	RADO Training

Be sure to verify the time and place of training on the countywide RACES net on the Thursday evening prior to the event. The countywide net airs at 7:20 PM on 147.735 Central County, 145.410 South County and 145.490 West County.

oppositions to specific petitions may use the ECFS to do so, but comments supporting one petition or another are not welcome, ARRL General Counsel Chris Imlay, W3KD, has pointed out. He says radio amateurs may file oppositions on any petition with which they have specific issues, but commenters should support their points with facts and statements. "All statements should be specific to one or more arguments in a reconsideration petition with which the person filing an opposition disagrees," Imlay explained. "They should not simply say, 'I oppose this petition.'"

K7RA Propagation Forecast

The sun was quiet this week, but a new chain of sunspots is rotating into a geo-effective position. There were some active days for geomagnetic conditions, most pronounced on March 6-8, and due to a solar wind stream. The average daily planetary A index rose less than 11 points to 20.1, and the average mid latitude A index rose less than 6 points to 12.3. Average daily sunspot numbers were up over 21 points to 36.1, and average daily solar flux rose less than 10 points to 85.9

Rising solar flux and increasing sunspots are expected over the next week. Solar flux should peak around March 15-16 near 115, then drop below 100 around March 20. The most active predicted geomagnetic day in the near term is March 14, but conditions should be merely unsettled, rather than stormy.

Enjoy the next few weeks. The period around the equinox, the change from winter to spring is a good time for HF propagation, even with the sunspot count so low.

With a cry of "Say it isn't so!" Vince Varnas, W7FA of Aloha, Oregon sent an article claiming that the next solar cycle, set to begin in a few years, may turn out to have the weakest maximum of any cycle in the past 100 years. He sent the article as an attachment, but I found it online at, <http://solar.uleth.ca/news/05Mar2005/index.php>. If that link is troublesome, try a cached version at <http://tinyurl.com/4j8cw>.

Let's hope the next one, Cycle 24, proves this forecasting method wrong. We don't see many solar cycles in our lifetimes, not to mention our time as amateur radio operators. I was lucky to start early at age 12, 40 years ago this month, and am in my 4th solar cycle. I was just young enough to have missed cycle 19, the grandest of them all, which peaked after the middle of the last century in the late 1950s.

Alex Mendelsohn, AI2Q of Kennebunk, Maine sent in a link to an interesting article from the Air Force Research Laboratory magazine about an all-sky imager that detects solar plasma clouds. You can read it at <http://www.afrlhorizons.com/Briefs/Dec04/VS0402.html>.

VOMARC Hamfest

We would like to invite you and the members of MDARC to the Valley of the Moon Amateur Radio Club (VOMARC) Hamfest on April 23rd (8am to 1pm) in beautiful Sonoma.

Activities include a swap meet, VE session, breakfast, fox hunt and a lot friendly folks. There will also be a special exhibit and demo of emergency communications vehicles from Red Cross and the County OES.

Go to our website, www.VOMARC.org, for more info, flyer, and a map.

Hope to see you there. 73, Jim Hill, President, Eileen Adams, Membership Chair.



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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March 7	7:30 pm	MDARC Board Meeting	Carl's Jr. 2280 Oakgrove, Walnut Creek
March 18	7:30 pm	MDARC General Meeting	Our Savior's Lutheran Church
March 31		April <i>Carrier</i> Deadline	
April 4	7:30 pm	MDARC Board Meeting	Carl's Jr. 2280 Oakgrove, Walnut Creek

The Carrier
Newsletter of the Mt. Diablo Amateur Radio Club
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Change in Service Requested

MDARC General Meeting: March 18th